



**Eddie A. Perez**  
**Mayor**

## **MAYOR PEREZ CALLS ON LIBRARY BOARD TO HOLD EMERGENCY PUBLIC MEETING**

### **---NEWS RELEASE---**

(July 14, 2008)---Mayor Eddie A. Perez is urging the Hartford Public Library Board of Trustees to hold an emergency public meeting so that residents can air their views on the closing of two popular library branches--- in the Asylum Hill and Blue Hills neighborhoods.

Mayor Perez says, "The members of the Library Board need to hear from the people first hand on how closing these two branches is not in the best interest of our children, their families, or this city."

Last month, the Mayor, along with City Council Leadership, sent a letter to the Chair of the Hartford Library Board of Trustees, strongly opposing the Library Board's decision to close the branches. The Mayor, along with City Council President Calixto Torres, Majority Leader rJo Winch, and Assistant Majority Leader Jim Boucher made suggestions on how to avoid this drastic measure.

Those options include, but are not limited to:

1. Emergency allocation of some of the funds from the Library Board's \$14 million unrestricted endowment;
2. Consideration of additional reduction of library hours staggered throughout the system;
3. Consideration of reductions to other non-core library programming

Once again, The Mayor and Council leadership acknowledge the difficult decisions that the Library Board has had to consider. They also restate their willingness to provide city budget staff members to help carefully analyze the financial impact of potential options.

The Mayor and Council approved a city budget that factored in budget revenue shortfalls and a worsening economy that necessitated approving a "less than maintenance budget." The final 2008-09 budget, approved by the City Council, provides \$8.2 million in funding to the Library. This is only a two-percent cut --- the same cut faced by all city departments.